

A
COMPANION
FOR
PRAYER:

OR,

Directions for Improvement in
Grace, and Practical God-
liness in time of Extraordi-
nary Danger.

By RICHARD ALLEIN,
Author of *Vinditie Pietatis*.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. R. for T. C.

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Directions for the
Grace and Pardon of
Sins in time of
Dying

By RICHARD
Author of "The

W. O. N. D. M.

Printed by J. R. R. T.

Reverend Sir,

THE motion made in yours
concerning Prayer, hath
much affected me, and
hath occasioned some workings of
my thoughts, which though (in a
conscience of mine own weakness I
more than once laid aside, yet they
still return'd upon me; and I do
now here offer the result of them
to your Consideration.

We all know and teach, that
they are only returning and refo-
rming Prayers that will prevail
with God; and 'tis to be doubted,
that in this dead and decayed age
there are too many professors who
will joyn in the design of Prayer,
whom this must serve instead of

Reformation, 'tis to such especially
that the Directions in the inclosed
Papers are intended. I send them
to you, desiring you to read them,
and then to do what you please with
them; beseeching you, and trusting
upon your friendly faithfulness here-
in, thar you will take your full free-
dom, either to keep them in silence
to your self, or else to communicate
and make them publick. I should
thankfully accept of any expung-
ings, alterations or additions that
you shall think needful. The Lord
pardon the failings, and accept the
sincere aims of my soul herein. To
his Grace I commend you, and in
him I rest,

Dear Sir,

Your unworthy Friend

and Servant,

RICHARD ALLEIN.

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TO make way for, and to press to the diligent observing the following Directions, let these things be premised.

1. That the Power of Religion is much fallen, at least is at a stand, amongst multitudes of Professors in *England*. Sure this needs no proof, when we have so many sad ocular Demonstrations hereof before us.

2. That for this, the Lord hath a controversy with us at this day, *Rev.* 2. 4. Whatever controversy the Lord hath with the *Belials* amongst us, whose horrible wickedness hath even repined them for vengeance, his special quarrel seems to be with his own people. We may guess against whom the special anger is, by observing at whose faces chiefly his arrows are levelled. Against whom do our enemies (the rod of his anger) make a wide mouth, and draw forth the tongue, and lift up their fiercest hands?

3. No Prayers will avail, nor have the least help in them, but the Prayers of such, with whom the Lords controversy is taken up and composed; those with whom he hath a particular quarrel, are like to be unhappy Mediators for others. We chuse the favourites of Princes to be our Intercessors with them.

4. There can be no taking up Gods controversy, unless the matter of it be removed by repentance and reformation;

Rev. 2. 5. Isa. 1. 15, 16, 18. When ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood; wash ye, make you clean, &c. Come now, and let us reason together. Josh. 7. 10. Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned—they have taken the accursed thing; and v. 12. I will not be with you any more, except the accursed thing be destroyed from amongst you. Is there no accursed thing amongst, even the Professors of Religion! Behold! the wedg of Gold, and the Babylonish garment, their pride and their covetousness, hid in their hearts for a tent. Go search out these, and every other accursed thing within you, let them be destroyed if ye would have the Lord to be at peace.

5. If there may be such a spirit of Prayer stir'd up amongst us, as may have his fruit unto Holiness, and real reformation of the evils of our ways; this would comfort us, and give us great hopes in the hardest cases.

6. Therefore in all our crying to God for his help, in case of publick fears, dangers or distresses, our eye should be firstly upon, and we should wrestle with the Lord for the pardoning, purging, and sanctification of our own hearts and lives; wherein if we prevail not, we shall be as a rotten tooth, or a bone out of joynt, for any help there is in us, or in any thing we do; unless we can pray up a spirit of Holiness in our selves, a spirit of Love, and of Power, and of a sound mind, we are not like to do any thing to purpose, in praying down Mercy for the people; the Devil will give us leave to visit the Throne of Grace, so we will but carry our hard and uncircumcised hearts with us; if we cannot get to be of the Lordsholy Ones, though we make many Prayers, he will not hear, here the interest and the hopes of the people of God lye, in the shedding abroad of the sanctifying and quickning spirit upon them; for this therefore should we firstly pray.

7. 'Tis not praying alone that will do: to the bringing on our Reformation, there must be also a constant and sedulous use of all Gods other means, in our whole course of Life.

8. Some of these means are presented in the following Directions.

1. General Directions.

Direct. 1. *Take up a deep and serious design of making an advance in serious Religion.* Sit not down by, take not up with what you have already attained, but resolve for reaching forward, and following after towards that which you have not attained; content not your selves to drive gently on;

on, as your flesh will bear, but stir up your selves to follow hard after the Lord; and let this be the deliberate decree and intent of your hearts. Say to thine heart, How is it with me? Doth my Soul prosper? Are my ways such as please the Lord? What is mine expectation and mine hope? What is the aim and business of my life? Is it that Christ may be magnified by me, and that I may be made partaker of his Holiness, and shew forth his Vertues in my generation? Can I say with the Apostle, *To me to live is Christ*? Ah wretch that I am! how deeply hath this self, and this world gone shares with my Lord! O! how little of my time, my parts, my strength, yea, and of my very heart also have been inclosed and consecrated as Holiness to the Lord! how much of me hath been left out in common for the world? Well, but what meanest thou for the future? Wilt thou henceforth change the purpose and intent of thine heart? Come man, wilt take up a design for, and henceforth determine and set thine heart upon a more watchful, fruitful, and heavenly life? If thou wilt not be brought to decree, and resolve upon a better life, much less wilt thou be perswaded actually to it. What's begun well, is half done; and an holy design deeply laid, is a good beginning.

Direct. 2. *Let Gods Calls to extraordinary prayer, and a sense of the necessity of your recovery and reformation, to your prevailing in prayer, quicken you on in the vigorous pursuance of your holy design.* Now is a time wherein you have your hearts at the advantage, having such weighty arguments before you, and the opportunity of doing two such great things more, as the saving of your selves, and also of the people, both from iniquity and calamity.

Direct. 3. *Do all you do, in pursuance hereof, in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Be not discouraged at any prospect of difficulty, trust in him for his help. Encourage your hearts with the words of the Apostle, *Phil. 4. 13. I shall be able to do all things through Christ that strengthens me.*

Direct. 4. *Keep your eye and your heart much upon God and the other world;* Be able to say with the Apostle, *Phil. 3. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven;* that is, there the business of our life lies; and that not only above spiritual and heavenly things, but with God himself. Live at the fountain and spring-head;

head ; thence all your light, and life , and holiness, and strength must flow down. Be much in looking upwards ; and beholding in a glass the glory of the Lord, you will be changed from Glory to glory, into the same Image, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Look much and often upon the things that are not seen, if ye would be delivered from the power and malign influence of the things that are seen ; let your eye be upon the Sun, and you will see a dimness and darkness upon the Earth ; get you clothed with the Sun, and you will get the Moon under your feet.

Direct. 5. *See that there be no allowed sin in your hearts or practice, Psal. 66. 18. If I regard Iniquity in mine heart, God will not hear my prayer, nor help me.* An allowed sin is as the dead flesh in the wound ; whatever methods or medicines be taken, there will be no healing till the dead flesh be eaten off ; you may profess, and pray, and hear all your life long, and yet will never prosper whilest you are privy to any one indulged sin.

Direct. 6. *Be constant and instant in daily, secret, and family prayer.* Let not extraordinary Prayer excuse your ordinary ; and let not your neglect of ordinary Prayer unfit you for extraordinary ; Let not your way to your Closet be untrod. He that holds his acquaintance in Heaven by being often with God, will be the most like to prevail with God in the most pressing and difficult cases ; those that are much in Prayer, those are the men that use to be mighty in Prayer.

Direct. 7. *In all your praying, both ordinary and extraordinary, let your eye be, (I say not chiefly, but) firstly upon the case of your own Souls :* What improvement you obtain here will be of this double advantage ; 1. There will be the more hope of your being heard for the publick. 2. If the Lord be not prevailed with for publick mercies and deliverances, yet you will be the better prepared for sufferings. If God should shew mercy as to the publick, should scatter our clouds, and blow over our storms, should cause our light to break forth as the morning, and our righteousness also as the noon-day ; yet what would all this be to thee, who art unrighteous ? What would it be to thee, if in all the Land of *Goshen* there should be light, and thou in the midst thereof shouldest be covered over with the darkness of *Egypt* ; if there should be dew on all the grass of the field, and thy fleece only should be dry ?

if

if thou shouldest live to see thy people a saved people, and an holy and fruitful Nation, and thou should'st stand as a withered and dry Tree amongst all the flourishing Cedars? Get up thine own heart into good proof; or whatever spiritual plenty thou maist see in *Israel*, yet thou wilt not eat thereof. Talk no more of thine hopes of seeing good days; how little would that be to thee, unless thou get thee a better heart?

Direct. 8. Let your prayers be followed with a constant care of your ways. Let not your praying serve you instead of repenting and reforming, but let it quicken you to your whole duty; let your entering into your Closet be your ascending heavenwards; and let not your returns thence be the falling down of your Souls from Heaven to Earth. Let your duties and ways be all of a piece; live like praying Christians. Let not the spirituality of your mornings and evenings, countenance or encourage you in your all-day carnality. *Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, Prov. 23. 17.*

Direct. 9. Whatever incomes you receive from God into your own Souls, be free in dispersing to others: I mean in a way of holy discourse and conference. Dispersing and communicating is the best way to thriving, *Prov. 11. 24. There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth, and it tendeth to poverty.* 'Tis true with respect to spirituals as well as to temporals. There are none that grow more rich towards God, than those, who by bringing forth what they have received, labour to make others rich also. Give the holy fire within you a vent, and it will burn the clearer. Keep not your Religion to your selves; let your full cup run over, let your lips drop as the honey-comb, let your mouth be a well of life, and your lips feed many, *Prov. 10. 11.* Build up one another in the most Holy Faith; provoke one another to love and to good works; let your Families, your Wives and Children, your Neighbours and Acquaintance, have light from your Candle, and be warmed by your Fire. Doubtless its one special part of Gods quarrel with Christians, That they are so very many of them, of such carnal and unfavoury converses. Is it [*thy*] case? hast thou this to charge upon thy self? O! amend, amend, and see that thou continue not such a barren Soul; as low as 'tis with thee in grace, think not to rise high, unless thou wilt make better use of what thou hast.

2. Particular Directions.

Direct. 1. Consider what it is whereto you have already attained, and be thankful; and thence be encouraged to press on, and hope for more. Hast thou obtained Grace from the Lord? and hath he caused his Grace to abound towards thee, and in thee? and hast thou a witness within thee that thou hast not received the Grace of God in vain? But dost thou study to walk worthy of that Grace wherein thou standest? O rejoyce in the Lord; and let all within thee bless his Holy Name; and take what thou hast thus received as an earnest of more. Set thy foot upon the neck of every mortified lust, take the more heart to thee to go on in the fight, and rejoyce in hope of a total and final victory, The Soldier, when one Wing of his Enemies Army is routed, or they do but give ground, and begin to fall, this raises his courage, and he falls more smartly on. Go thou and do likewise; and let thy beginning, much more thy growth in Grace, and thy experiences hereof, be the oiling of thy wheels, for thy more vigorous following on after, yet a greater increase.

Direct. 2. Consider what your special corruptions, infirmities, wants, neglects, temptations, or your most ordinary falls are.

1. What your special corruptions are, how far forth you have conquered them, and where you stick. In some professors, Pride; in others Covetousness; in others, Sensuality; in others, Sloathfulness; in others, Peevishness, or Frowardness, or the like; may have gotten such head in them, that these weeds overtop, and even choak up all their flowers.

2. What your special wants or weaknesses are in point of Grace; what Graces they are, whether Faith, or Love, or Peacefulness, or Meekness, or Humility, or Patience, &c. wherein you are most deficient or weak.

3. What Duties they are, as either Prayer, Meditation, Communing with your own hearts, &c. which you are most apt to neglect, or find most difficult to go comfortably through.

4. What Temptations they are, by which you are most commonly assaulted or foiled.

5. What your most ordinary Falls are in point of practice. And here let Professors of Religion be warned to consider, if they be not overtaken (besides many others) by some of these four evils.

1. An over-eager and greedy following after the World: The zeal of some mens spirits

rits after riches, hath eaten up all their zeal of God. O! into what poverty hath thy Soul fallen, whilst thou hast been so busie in the world, and hast felt the prosperities thereof come crouding in upon thee! Some rich Professors may remember the days of old, and be troubled. This thought, When I was but a little one in th's world, then was it better with me than now; this thought may be an Arrow in their hearts, and kill the joy, and let out the juyce and sweetness of their greatest abundance. I remember the kindness of my youth, and the love of mine espousals; but O where am I now! my very rising hath given me the fall. 2. A liberty for carnal jollity, a jovial and vainly merry life, such there are, who have left off to walk mournfully before the Lord of Hosts, and have given themselves to live merrily with the World; who have given over to weep with them that weep, and are fallen in to laugh with them that laugh; to jest and sport, and be vain with the vain ones, yea and it may be to drink and to sit by it with those that drink. It's now grown too creditable to frequent drinking Houses: Tradesmen that are Professors, especially in Cities or great Towns, how ordinarily do they, upon pretence of dispatch of business, sit many hours over a dish of Coffee, or a Cup of Ale, or a glass of Sack; and carry it so, that they can hardly be distinguished from the good Fellows of the world, but perhaps by this only, That they are not down-right drunken into Beasts. If there be a liberty of such Houses, and meetings in them sometimes necessary (as perhaps it may) yer let not this liberty be used as an occasion to the flesh. 3. Gaudiness or over-costliness in Apparel, wherein some of them glitter and shine amongst the greatest Gallants of the Earth. Some amongst professors do not only shun, but disdain and despise the old self-denial that was wont to be among Christians in these and the like particulars, as if they were set at liberty by the Gospel from the Laws of Christ, as well as from the Law of Moses. To these three let me add one evil more: 4. A neglect of your Families; of the Instructing, Catechising, and due disciplining them; the consequences of which neglect are very sadly to be seen in the ignorance, errors, rudeness and disorderliness abounding amongst many of them: there are not a few who take some care of themselves, but leave the bridle on the necks of theirs, and reap many heart-breaking crops in them, as the fruits of their own negligence. O let holy Joshua's resolution be yours: *As for me and mine house, we will serve the Lord.* Josh. 24. 15. Now

Now diligently search and consider thy self in all these things; and when thou hast faithfully studied thy self and thy ways, and hast found what it is that thou art most peccant or wanting in, and most prejudiced and hindred by; then conclude, *here my great difficulty lies*, and therefore here my great work lies, if ever I would prosper, to get this or that corruption to be mortified, this or that grace strengthened, such and such temptations to be shunned or provided against, and such and such faults to be amended, now I have found what hinders me; and that which doth hinder, will hinder, till it be taken out of the way.

Direct. 3. *Bend the main force of all your Religion upon those very points wherein you are most failing or faulty.* The Devil will allow us to be busie in other matters of Religion, so he can but keep us off from those things where our great stresses lies: And the deceitful heart will take up with that which is most easie and pleasant, that thereby it may the better shift it self of that which is more hard, and would go to the quick with it. We never purge or bleed to purpose, till we hit upon the right humour, and strike the right vein.

This is to act rationally, and in judgment; to bend our great strength there, where our great difficulty or weakness lies. When you have by searching found out what you mostly stick at: let it be your first grand errand in every Prayer, whether ordinary or extraordinary, to beg special help in this particular case: your weakness in any particular grace or duty, the power of any particular lust, corruption; or temptation, your most ordinary and common falls in point of conversation; let these have a special place in every prayer you make: And also let them be most heedfully watched and laboured against in your lives. Turn in the strength of Prayer, and watchfulness upon the strength of Sin; let your main batteries be against the strong holds; and where your walls are weakned, there set the strongest guard and watch.

Direct. 4. *Measure your proficiency in Religion, by the power you get in those particulars, wherein you have been most deficient or faulty.* Judge not your selves by those things which are most easie in Religion, but by your coming off in your most difficult case.

Some professors may at times seem to be full of good affections, strangely elevated and enlarged in their prayers;
yea,

yea, and to live in so great peace, as to take themselves to have attained to the riches of full assurance, and yet for all this may be but very poor Christians all the while. Let them be asked, How is it with your Soul? O! I bless the Lord, I find it very comfortable: I have sweet communion with God in Prayer, and I live in the sweet and refreshing light of his countenance; he washeth my steps with Butter, and his Sun shineth upon my paths; I thank the Lord I go comfortably on. But stay man, How is it with thine old corruptions? Thou wert once intolerably proud, or forward, or earthly, or a jolly and vainly merry soul; what ground hast thou gotten of those very corruptions under which thou most groanedst? How is it with thee with respect to temptation? Dost thou fear and fly from temptation, and do what thou canst to keep thy self out of harms way? and when thou fallest into temptation, when thou art actually tempted to Pride or Covetousness, when thou art provoked to passion or impatience, how goes it with thee then? how standest thou in the day of temptation? How is it with thee in regard of thy wonted evils in thy conversation? Hast thou founded a retreat from thy eager chase after the great things of the world? Thou hast been a zealot for encreasing thine earthly Substance, art thou now become more moderate: Thou wert once a sloathful, lazy soul in the matters of God, art thou now more diligent and industrious? art thou fervent in spirit, serving the Lord? Thou once livedst a jolly, frothy and merry life, dost thou now carry it with more seriousness? Hast thou left thy lying and deceitful dealing? Thou hast been a self-seeker, and a flesh-pleaser, but canst say, through the Grace of God, I have now betaken my self to a self-denying-life; and dost thou deny thy self in those very things wherein thou wert used most to seek thy self? Put thy self upon a close and severe trial here; and know that if the strong hold be not battered and broken, if thine old lusts do still hold their power in thee, if the old sore be still issuing out, the old stream be still running its course; if thou canst not say, I have kept me from *[mine]* iniquity, or at least am fighting more resolvedly against it; if thou still stickest where thou wert wont to stick (whatsoever flush thou seemest to have of good affections, (whatsoever confidence thou hast of thy good condition) 'tis a sure sign it is not so well with thee. Look to what degree of success thou hast attained in those things wherein thy great difficulty lay; to such a degree of soul-prosperity thou hast attained, and no more.

Direct

Direct. 3. *Measure your hopes of the Answer of your Prayers for the publick, by your experience of their speeding in your own particular cases.* If thy sin can stand before all thy prayers, thy Enemies, fears, and dangers are not like to fall ever the sooner for such praying; what God may do upon the prayers of others, thou knowest not; but nothing is like to go the better for thee. If thou hast run with the foot men (with-in thee) and these have been too hard for thee, how wilt thou contend with them that ride upon horses? If thou canst not stop the muddy streams of thine own cistern, how wilt thou stand before the swelling of *Jordan*? If thy prayers prevail so little to the setting thine own heart, or thine own house in order, how canst think they will do any thing against the hosts of the uncircumcised; *God beareth not sinners*; not only such sinners as are in a state of sin, and totally alienated from the life of God, but even such also, who though for the main, they have been once washed in the blood of Christ, are again fallen into, and wallowing in the mud and mire of any one allowed sin; they are all like to be but miserable comforters in the day of distress. Remember that Scripture mentioned before, *Psal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer.*

But on the other side, if thou dost obtain, if thou dost prevail in thine own personal case, this hath good hope in it. 'Tis an argument that thy Prayers are accepted with God; and if the Lord accept thee when thou prayest for thy self, or for thine house, thence the greater hope will spring that he will accept thee when thou prayest for his own house and people. And if he doth accept thee for them, he will either deliver them out of their distress, and thou shalt have the honour to be one of those for whose sake deliverance comes; or if he should not grant thy request as to the publick, yet he will not fail to give thee thine own soul for a prey, though he do not give thee the lives of them that sail with thee in the Ship.

And now you see the best way that is open to you, to help at a pinch, to save the poor distressed Churches of God in this time of their need, such praying as may have its fruit unto holiness in your selves; by this you may do much to promote the holiness and happiness of the people; if any thing, this will do it.

Wherefore gird up your loyns, and set in good earnest upon this seasonable and mighty duty. Go into your closets, lift up your hearts, draw forth your souls, pour out your
tears,

tears, weep in your prayer, weep over your own and the peoples sins and fears, and bow your selves with your might before the Lord; this once try what you can do, try the strength of Prayer. Pray all to rights within you, and at home, and then seek and cry, and wrestle, and trust, and wait for the Salvation of God to be revealed in due time upon his people.

Let us at length hear the conclusion of the whole matter, what shall be the fruit of all this: What will you now do? If I should only ask, Who among you will join in, and pray, pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, the Church of the living God? every one would readily answer, I will be for one, I for another, God forbid I should hold my peace, I will pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, *Let them prosper that love thee: Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy Palaces. For my Brethren and companions sake I will pray, Peace be within thee, because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good,*

If it be asked further, and who will pray for the destruction of *Babylon*? O, every one of us that have an heart for the peace of *Jerusalem*. Down with it, down with it even to the Ground. Remember, O Lord, the Children of *Edom*, in the day of *Jerusalem*, who said, Raze it, raze it even to the very foundation. O Daughter of *Babylon* that art to be destroyed, happy let him be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

But would you that your Prayers should be heard? Then arise out of your places, and fall every man upon a personal Reformation. Down with your sin, and out with the world; lift up Christ in your own hearts, if you would have Anti-christ fall in the Earth; let Christ have a name within you above every name, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, from his own iniquity; seek not for Corn, and for wine, or for freedom to sit down every man under his own Vine, and under his own fig-tree, where none shall make them afraid; but seek the Lord, that the Lord God may dwell among you, may delight in you and be exalted by you, that you may indeed become the people of his Holiness, and the people of his Prayer; seek to be made partakers of his holiness, and follow after holiness, and so follow after that ye may obtain. Let there be such a heart in you, and such an holy design heartily taken up, and zealously pursued by you, and the Lord will certainly accept you, and answer your prayers, and your prophane
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enemies will then learn to take heed how they again mock or boast themselves against the Prayers of the Saints. It was reported of a great Church-man, that when several Ministers were turn'd out of their places for non-conformity, he said in disdain, *Wee'l turn them out, and let them see if they can pray them in again.* Once lift up [holy] hands to the Lord, and God will give such Answer, that they will take heed of boasting again against Prayer. And if yet they should take unto them the hardiness, to say where is your God? Doubt not but in a little time you shall have this song put into your mouths, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his salvation.*

But if it must suffice you to pray, and you will still go on to traverse your old ways, suffering your sins and the world to hold the head of you, let not such men think they shall receive any thing of the Lord.

Wherefore once again be exhorted to come to a point in this matter, and determine what ye will do; If ye will not heartily come in, in this necessary design of advancing in holiness, you may even stand aside, and sit out from that of Prayer, for any good we can expect from you: But if you are resolved on the former, and that with all imaginable seriousness, you will the more prosper in the latter; let both go together in one, and thenceforth look for good speed in either.

Well, shall this Decree immediately go forth? Say the word once, but let it be with an unalterable resolution; at least, be advised to this (which I pray forget not) from the day of your next solemn appearing before God in this duty of Prayer for the publick, let your Decree be dated; and if need be, let the very day be written down, and so go, and let it be heedfully prosecuted; and upon each return of this solemn service, let it be actually and expressly renewed. *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people and prepare their heart unto thee.*

F I N I S.

